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9 April 1959

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN



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DAILY BRIEF

I. THE COMMUNIST BLOC

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Watch Committee conclusion--Berlin: No significant changes bearing on the possibilities of hostilities.

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II. ASIA-AFRICA

mo Arab League: The political committee of the Arab League, in its communiqué issued on 7 April, has indicated that its efforts to reconcile the UAR and Iraq have failed. The meeting is reported to have been marked by considerable resentment against UAR efforts to use it merely as a sounding board for anti-Qasim propaganda. Iraq, Jordan, Tunisia, and Libya were not represented in the five-day session.

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Iraq: In a move designed to weaken Nasir's control over the 70 percent of Iraq's oil transport which moves through Syria, the strongly pro-Communist Iraqi minister of economy has told the Iraq Petroleum Company that his government wants the company to construct a pipeline from Kirkuk to the Persian Gulf. Although its position is becoming increasingly untenable, IPC probably will strongly resist this request in view of the costs involved and the government's probable intention eventually to nationalize the company. [REDACTED]

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USSR-Kurds-Iraq: The USSR is continuing to repatriate to Iraq a number of Kurds, including some families, in a shipload of some 820 which is due to arrive at Basra about 18 April. Since the 14 July coup, Qasim has made a series of concessions to the 800,000-strong Kurdish minority and he can probably continue for the present to count on Kurdish support in the face of UAR threats to his regime. If Qasim should attempt to curb Iraqi Communists and loosen his ties with the bloc, Communist-indoctrinated elements among the Kurds can be expected to join in any pressure tactics against Qasim and would probably renew agitation for an independent Kurdish state. [REDACTED]

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Watch Committee conclusion--Middle East: Situations susceptible of direct exploitation by Sino-Soviet bloc hostile action which would jeopardize US interests exist in the Middle East, particularly in Iraq. The situation in the area remains precarious, but a deliberate initiation of large-scale hostilities is unlikely in the immediate future.

Iraq: The rapid progress of the Communists toward control of Iraq is continuing. Tension along the Syrian-Iraqi border has increased and incidents are likely. [REDACTED]

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DAILY BRIEF

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Pakistan: President Ayub has taken the first step toward returning the Pakistani Government to civilian hands, which he promised to do as soon as the army had "cleaned up the mess" left by politicians. Ayub has drafted an "outline" of a new national constitution envisaging a strong central government, a powerful presidency--which he expects to retain--and indirect elections to national offices. Although he recognizes the need for popular support, Ayub plans nevertheless to maintain firm control of the mechanism whereby the public participates in government)

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France-Morocco: French seizure on 8 April of a 580-ton cargo of Czech arms believed consigned to the Moroccan Government, but which France feared were destined for the Algerian rebels, seems certain to create new tensions in Morocco's relations with France. These arms may have been the second lot of materiel ordered by the Balafrej government last year after France had demurred on supplying all the materiel Morocco desired. Moroccans, following up informal approaches to the United States, may soon present a list of materiel desired from the United States. They are likely to interpret any delay in shipment as American support for France.)

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DAILY BRIEF

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Petroleum Developments in Iraq

Despite disclaimers that it intends to nationalize the country's oil industry, Baghdad has made a number of moves consistent with eventual nationalization. Prime Minister Qasim recently stated that although plans for nationalizing the 23.75-percent French share in the Iraq Petroleum Company (IPC), had not been discussed, they would be in the future.

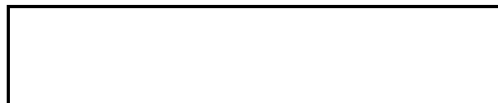
In a move designed to weaken Nasir's control over the 70 percent of Iraq's oil transport which moves through Syria, the strongly pro-Communist Iraqi minister of economy has told IPC that the government wants the company to construct a pipeline from the Kirkuk oil fields in northern Iraq to the Persian Gulf. Refusal could provide the Baghdad regime with a pretext for beginning the piecemeal nationalization of the oil industry.

At the American-operated but government-owned Dura refinery at Baghdad, Communist infiltration and the discharge of increasing numbers of American technicians have greatly increased the likelihood of fires and explosions. In any such event, mob violence against American employees appears likely.

Moscow is assisting in operating the Khanaqin oil concession relinquished by IPC last fall. There is no confirmation, however, of reports that Baghdad has granted Moscow an offshore concession in the Persian Gulf area also given up by IPC.



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Pakistani President Ayub's Ideas for New Constitution

(Pakistani President Ayub is drafting an initial "outline" of a new constitution for Pakistan. He apparently considers his own leadership vital and intends to use his power as president of the present military regime to promulgate a constitution unilaterally at some unspecified time.)

(Ayub envisions a strong central government and a powerful, De Gaulle-type presidency. He intends to be president himself and maintain firm control of the government by limiting popular participation mainly to local matters. As yet undefined concepts, such as making the constitution "Islamic," and long-standing problems, such as the relationship between East and West Pakistan, will encounter divergent views within the military regime, and some compromises will be required.)

(Ayub may not intend to publicize his proposals until he considers that his martial-law regime has at least a minimum record of instituting reforms and improving governmental efficiency. At that time, he apparently intends to wage a brief propaganda campaign to gain public acceptance of a constitution. He expects to be assisted in this by a constitutional commission which will elicit reactions to the proposed constitution and which will help persuade the people to accept it.)

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